SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year – June 12, 1972

No 151

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

6 AUG 2 1 1972
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editorial

nixon the war president

MR NIXON again tried to sell peace. Addressing members of both Houses on June 2, he bragged about the "achievements" of his tour abroad. He again referred to an "era of negotiation," boasting that the US was shifting from a period of confrontation to a period of negotiation and that he was constantly concerned with ridding the world of war.

PEACE and negotiation have always been the incumbent US President's favourite themes. In 1968, to get admitted to the White House he put forth a plan to extricate the US rapidly from the tunnel with no end in sight in Viet Nam. But he has not changed an iota his nature, as a loyal and efficient spokesman of US monopoly capitalism and an overambitious hawk, as events in Viet Nam and Indochina have clearly indicated. The war there is raging with increasing fury. Not only has Nixon not put an end to it but has even taken a leaf from Johnson's book and improved on it, by escalating US aggression against Viet Nam and Laos and extending the fighting to Cambodia, thereby turning it into the most savage and brutal war in history.

While prattling about a world without war, he has ordered the DRVN ports mined and blockaded, her territory struck with utmost fierceness from the air and the sea and her southern part dragged through a stepped-up extermination war. The killings on this peninsula are threatened with fresh intensification with Nixon's deployment of an unprecedentedly large armada off Viet Nam's coast, reopening of many airfields in Thailand, commitment of more planes to Viet Nam and other Indochinese countries.

He has described his forced phasing out of troops as an attempt to disengage the US from Viet Nam. But as a matter of fact, his "Vietnamization" is nothing short of a US war of aggression, directed and financed by the US, supplied with US engines of death. The Saigon army, the strategic force of the scheme, is only a contingent of mercenaries at the service of the US.

Therefore the current "Vietnamized" war is no relevant illustration of Mr Nixon's will for peace. And the world of today is still plagued by a dangerous war, even though it is "Vietnamized," and universal peace is thus in grave jeopardy. With "Vietnamization," the US president is getting involved deeper and deeper in Viet Nam, and proving himself to be the most trigger-happy aggressor and fire-eater representative of US imperialism.

BUT the "Vietnamization" strategy is in a serious bind, and the Saigon soldiery, its backbone, put to a tough test, while "pacification" has suffered heavy setbacks in many localities. The formula Saigon army + high level US support is dismally inoperative. Tricky Dick is under fire from every quarter. At home and abroad the credibility gap is widening and hard times are in store for him in the coming presidential race.

He seems to take great pride in the results of the military measures announced in his May 8 address. He has been trying to make the public believe that they are the most efficacious means to extricate the US from the Indochina quagmire. But their very nature calls in question his assertions: How can one save one's henchmen under devastating attack in the South by raining bombs and bullets on the North from planes and ships? How can "Vietnamization" in the South be salvaged by an air and naval war against the North? In the history of war, aviation and navy have never played a decisive role. They will not smooth Mr Nixon's way out of his predicament either. The safest way out for him is to give up his aggressive design, enter into serious talks with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam at the Paris Conference instead of trying to scuttle it. There is no better forum for the Nixon Administration to show its peace will and its intention to bring about an era of negotiation and to seek a negotiated settlement of the Viet Nam conflict. Its subversive manoeuvres against the peace parley, and repeated attempts to knock at the wrong door will not help it at all.

ANTI-WAR feeling is running high in the US as well as in the world with recrudescence of protest actions like demonstrations, meetings, bomb attacks, etc... They are clear warnings that in the Viet Nam and Indochina gamble, taking further risks will surely lead to ruin. The American people have got tired of being cheated. They are fully aware that their fight against the Nixon doctrine and the policy of aggression of their present administration is of special importance to their interests and to US honour. It is likely to gain in intensity.

The Vietnamese and the peoples of the world completely identify themselves with such an effort and naturally if Mr Nixon refuses to learn the lesson of history and continues to follow Mr Johnson's track, he will be the architect of his own political demise.

SOUTH VIET NAM

US bomb craters or ready tombs for the Yankees on our soil

UNDER THE US-THIEU REGIME OF TERROR

SOUNDLY and repeatedly beaten in various battlefields, the Saigon puppet administration is showing its true features as a gang of fascist dictators.

Immediately after the victories won by the PLAF in Quang Tri, the Central Highlands, Binh Long, etc., Nguyen Van Thieu requested the Saigon "National Assembly" to grant him full powers for the requisition of manpower and wealth needed to prolong Nixon's criminal war of aggression. To get rid of those outside his own clan within the puppet administration and army, he dismissed three generals, a major governor of province and was about to prosecute 48 other officers ranging from major to colonel on charge of "letting the communists carry out successful offensives." In the meantime, the psywar machine in Saigon was launching a campaign to falsify the PLAF resounding successes and invent imaginary "victories" of the Saigon army in the hope of boosting up the rapidly declining morale of the officers, troops and civil servants of the puppet administration. "Nine measures of security" were enforced by Nguyen Van Thieu to scrape up all resources available in the US-puppet occupied areas with a view to heaving up the sinking "Vietnamization" policy and limiting to the maximum all elementary freedoms.

But all these crafty and savage moves did not succeed in saving Nguyen Van Thieu from distress; on the contrary a new impulse was given to desertions, mutinies and disobediences by the puppet troops and civil servants, and to the struggle waged by all social strata against the US and Thieu to wrest back their right to live. Disorder and trouble are prevailing in nearly all cities and towns of South Viet Nam, including Hue, Da Nang, Quang Ngai, Quy Nhon, Pleiku, Bien Hoa, Tay Ninh, Saigon, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long, Can Tho, Ben Tre, My Tho... Life there is like in a mad-house, as many Western correspondents have remarked.

In Hue, puppet soldiers fled in from Quang Tri, bare-footed, bare-headed, livid-faced and with no guns in their hands. What they did was looting, burning houses and markets and scuffling in the streets. Dong Ba Market and a cement factory built on US aid fund were reduced to ashes or thoroughly ransacked. 5,000 people in Hue took to the streets to demand supply of food and foodstuffs, punishment against speculators, the return of those members of their families sent by Thieu to the frontline to die in place of GIs, and cessation of the US war of aggression. The demonstrators marched through the main arteries of Hue city, besieged the office of the governor of Thua Thien - Hue, and demanded that he give them satisfaction. Policemen were dispatched to crack down upon them and violent clashes ensued which stirred the whole city.

In Da Nang, the military police carried out day and night searches for forcible enrolment. In the first week of May 1971, 2,000 people were arrested, including those found in possession of exemption certificates issued by the Saigon administration, 2nd class war-wounded and young women. Many so-called "refugees from communism" driven from Quang Tri to Hue are living a life of utter misery in this latter city, not a few by begging. Looting is rampant. Many shops have to close down. Trade unionists, youths and students, war invalids of the puppet army took turns to fight for democratic freedoms, better living conditions, against forcible enrolment, the rule of Nguyen Van Thieu, US troops' prolonged stay in South Viet Nam.

In Quang Ngai town, streets are crowded with people of all categories. There are routed soldiers deserting from Quang Tri; in defiance of the police and military police, they overtly voice their fear at the stormy attacks by the PLAF. There are also women and children begging for their living, lying or sitting on pavements of the main streets, in front of restaurants or in markets. Hospitals and first-aid posts are filled with war wounded soldiers from the puppet army. One may hear their wives or mothers crying and cursing the US and Thieu for having pitted their dear ones to a useless death. The number of police posts and layers of barbed wire has increased manifold: all vehicles and pedestrians leaving or coming to the city are carefully checked. Military convoys run at full speed, policemen and military policemen whistle without let-up, search every house, every market corner, even schools, for conscripts whom they drive into cloaked military wans and send to the battlefields. In spite of US-puppet terror and repression, teach-ins and discussions continue to be centered on the 10-point policy of the RSVN PRG vis-a-vis the puppet armymen and their families. Leaflets and posters of the NFL and PRG appear more and more often in the streets, right in front of the police station and even of the office of the governor of Quang Ngai province. As the police forcibly impress young people into the puppet army, they are violently opposed by the city folks who use stones, bricks, glass bottles to fight them and wrest back their next of kins.

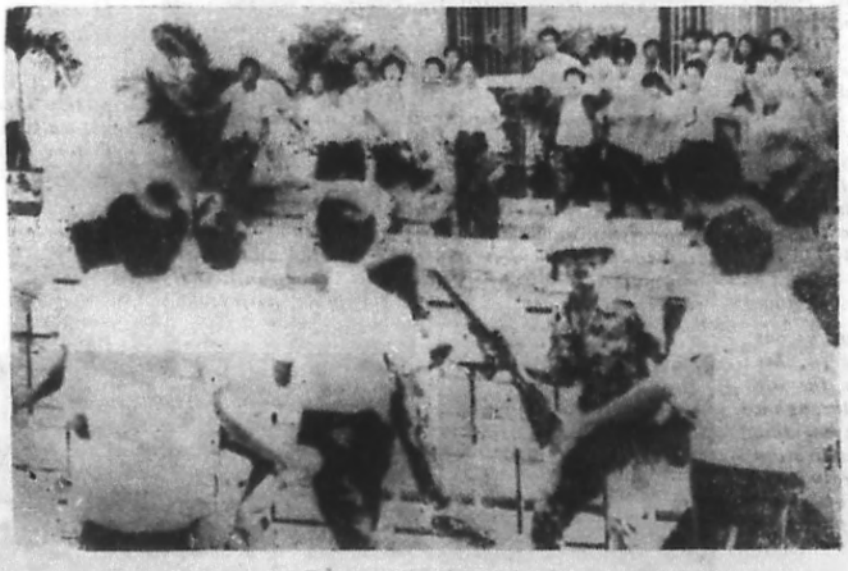
In Bien Hoa town, each day sees hundreds of people pouring into the streets to demand the return of their sons or husbands forcibly enrolled by the authorities. One day, 300 people gathered in the hospital of the 3rd puppet military zone, the Binh Long field hospital and the town cemetery to demand compensation for lost lives and the return of puppet soldiers to their families. In defiance of prohibitions by the enemy, they overtly denounced and cursed the US and Thieu for their criminal acts of pushing South Vietnamese to die in defence of US interests. The whole town of Bien Hoa was stirred up.

In Saigon where the US-Thieu repressive apparatus is the strongest and the most active, trouble and disorder however are the keynotes. Saigon's economy is going downhill as a result of policies and measures taken by the treacherous clique of Nguyen Van Thieu: many firms have to stop functioning, even big enterprises are vegetating. Tens of thousands of workers become jobless after being dismissed. Speculation rapidly expands and commodity prices are rocketing. In defiance of the Thieu administration's prohibition of all gatherings, the Saigonese throng everyday in front of "mobilization centres" to question, denounce and oppose the puppet authorities' criminal decisions. People whose dear ones were impressed into the puppet army flock at the General Staff office, military schools and hospitals to demand their release. One may find in Saigon streets women wearing white mourning scarves crying and incriminating the US and Thieu for having deprived them of their sons or husbands. Rallies and meetings are staged by the hundreds by trade-unions and manifestoes issued to flay the reactionary decisions on economy and the "nine measures of security" of the Saigon administration. They insist that everybody should be left free to earn his living, either in production or in trades; they oppose dismissal and repression of workers and demand wage lift. The students and pupils organize school boycotts and demonstrations to counter the administration's violation of University autonomy, and demand the release of their class-mates, the lowering of rice and commodity prices. 31 progressive bodies in Saigon send letters to peace-loving organizations in the world calling upon them to condemn the genocidal war and massacre of the Vietnamese people by Nixon, the chieftain of imperialism. Pressmen paying no heed to Nguyen Van Thieu's press regulations tirelessly write articles reflecting public opinions' opposition to the "nine measures of security" and giving a true picture of various battlefields which is quite "detrimental" to the Saigon administration, as the Western press puts it.

Disorder not only prevails in the cities and towns, but also in "parliament." On May 14, more than 40 MPs in Saigon staged a sit-down demonstration in front of the Lower House against Thieu's fascist rule and his request for full powers.

It is crystal clear that the Thieu regime is thoroughly rotten from its very foundations. The US stooges in Saigon are irrevocably doomed.

AI THI



Saigon students storming the "National Assembly" Office in a demonstration

in the cities

o Thousands of Vietnamese employees at the American firm CNT in Cam Ranh have decided on a protest strike against the slicing of seniority and family allowances and holiday pay. Representatives of the Union have urged an end to this practice, satisfaction of the employees' claims and fair treatment for them.

o Over 200 teachers, office workers, MPs and administrative personnel in the capital of Ben Tre province organized on May 14 a teach-in against the decree on the drafting of government employees, which will send civil servants to the battlefield to die in the place of American troops. Petitions were passed and sent to the administration in the province and in Saigon demanding the cancellation of this infamous decree, the resignation of Thieu, and the forming of a coalition government.

o To follow up the 9 fascist measures introduced in mid-May, the Thieu administration has increased the prices of, and imposed "special taxes" on, a series of commodities to get more funds for "Vietnamization." The "special taxes" in particular have met with strong resistance from the people, the consumers first of all, who demand an end to these fascist measures to alleviate their difficulties.

o The indiscriminate military conscription to fill the gaps in the Saigon army, and the scandalous blackmail practised by Thieu's agents have met with vigorous opposition from the people of all walks of life. 900 skilled workers and 180 journalists to be inducted soon have petitioned for an end to forcible draft and announced their intention to rebel once in the army.

Officials of the Education Ministry also denounced the arbitary decision of the Defence Ministry to enlist students which, they said, had brought colleges and universities to a standstill. A member of the Lower House revealed that in Saigon, Gia Dinh and other cities, people of the call-up age had had to pay bribes to Thieu's recruiting agents.

o In Da Nang, the quisling administration has unwarrantedly taken into custody a member of the Baptist mission and over 200 students, on the charge of "assistance" to Communists" in their attacks on the city.

Public feeling is running high against this illegal move and has urged for the release of the arrested.

o Tran Nguon Phien, the Minister for Social Affairs in Saigon, revealed on May 27 that plans were being made to deport hundreds of thousands of "war refugees" to disguised concentration camps on various islands off the coast of South Viet Nam.

Meanwhile in Hue, the US-Thieu clique arrested over 1,200 people and deported them to the Poulo Condor Island without trial. Most of the victims were students, intellectuals, teachers, and Buddhist monks active in the movement for welfare and democracy.

In Saigon, the managers of the papers *Cuu Nuoc* (National Salvation), *Chon* (Selection) and *Bao Lua* (Fire Storm) were fined or sentenced to imprisonment for having run articles "detrimental to national security.",

Craters

(Concluded)

I was able to visit on foot three such craters in an agricultural area about 30 miles south of My Tho in the heart of the Mekong Delta. The area, near the hamlet of Hoi Son, had been a free-fire zone until fairly recently, but farmers were now being resettled on their land because senior officials considered the region relatively secure. The degree of security became evident: during my stay in the area, US aircraft were rocketing and strafing only a few miles away. I interviewed some families who had left the area eleven years ago because of the fighting. They took me to three craters made in 1967. I would estimate that they were caused by 500-pound bombs dropped by fighter-bombers. Each crater was about 30 feet in diameter filled with water and, at the time of my visit, about 4 feet deep in the center, as proven by one of my guides. He waded into the center of the crater where he could just manage to keep his nose above the water while standing. The entire immediate vicinity had been a rice paddie, the rice had been replaced by a very tall reed (6 to 8 feet), genus *Phragmites*, which surrounded the craters at a distance of 10 to 20 feet. Growing from the rim of the craters and into the reeds was a species of relatively short grass, genus *Brachiaria*. A taller grass, Scirpus, was also prevalent. The whole area was inundated by very shallow water, as it was the middle of the wet season. The farmers were growing seed rice near the craters and were plowing under the reeds and grasses in preparation for planting rice. It was obvious that they could not use the cratered areas for rice cultivation, because the water was much too deep. One solution to the problem is to bring in soil from elsewhere. Although I could not confirm it, one farmer said that the craters I observed yielded exceptionally good fish catches. The fish presumably had moved into the craters during the monsoon flooding. Surrounding the area that had been cultivated in rice were banana, coconut, and jackfruit trees. The jackfruit was dead as a result of herbicides; the coconut trees were destroyed by the bombing, leaving only bare stumps.

In our conversations with these and other farmers who were trying to resettle their fought-over land, it became obvious that their main problem was the presence of unexploded munitions in the areas. The Hoi Son people state that within the last few weeks, three women had been killed and one badly wounded when plows detonated unexploded weapons. We learned that mines in some resettled areas have been cleared, but the problem of locating and neutralizing unexploded ordnance before land is resettled is an urgent one. On several occasions we encountered the fear of unexploded munitions, which probably accounts for a phenomenon we often observed from the air: fields with craters were usually not being cultivated although nearby fields were. One farmer whom we interviewed stated that the people do not like to plow in the bombed areas because the shrapnel in the dirt cuts the buffalos' hoofs, resulting in infection.

According to the science spokesman of the US Agency for International Development (USAD) and the Military Assistance Command, Viet Nam (MACV), bomb craters are sometimes used as sources of freshwater for irrigation. In much of the southern Mekong Delta, blackish (salty) water floods cultivated lands at high tides if it is not kept back by dikes. Thus, irrigation is necessary and freshwater in the craters could be useful.

Presumably the permanently water-filled crater areas of the delta region are excellent breeding grounds for certain species of mosquitoes and other carriers (vectors) of disease. Those craters not invaded by predators of mosquiso larvae provide conditions for greatly accelerated reproduction of mosquitoes and other vectors. According to MACV-Command Information pamphlet 6-70, February 1970, "malaria has been causing increasing concern in Viet Nam... Up until recently it (Plamodium falciparum) only affected regions of I and II Corps but has now spread to other areas throughout the country." We discussed with several scientists the possible relationship between craterization and this increase in malaria, but no studies have yet been made of this problem as far as we could determine. A USAID specialist in public health with headquarters in Saigon stated that the current alarming increase in hemorrhagic (dengue) fever seen in the Vietnamese was not related to craterization because the mosquito vector for this disease, *Aedes aegipty*, lives only in and around houses and would thus not be affected by ecological changes such as craterization. (We do not know of any field research which supports this view.) We flew a mosquito-control spray mission in a C-123 aircraft from which malathion was being sprayed (one-half pound per acre) over and around an Australian military base. There are only two aircraft now carrying out this program, and, as far as we were able to determine, there is no spray program involving treatment of cratered areas.

We observed many craters in isolated mountain valleys near Da Nang. They were in small clusters in mountain rice fields and thus were probably caused either by artillery of fighter-bomber strikes and not by B-52s. In these valleys the craters were generally filled with water as in the dry season and thus cannot be used for fish culture. The paddies that had been cratered were not being cultivated. During our visit we flew over many rice paddies with ponds in the centers almost comparable in size (about ten feet across) to the bomb craters, but these were fish ponds and apparently did not interfere with the cultivation of the rice surrounding the ponds. It is thus unlikely that scattered craters could create changes in soil moisture or other conditions that would make cratered paddies uncultivable.

We observed from the air large areas of mangrove swamps of the Rung Sat Zone which had been subjected to very heavy B-52 strikes. These are all permanently waterfilled and obviously would make transportation into the area very difficult. This could be of some significance because the mangrove forests have been regularly used as sources of wood for charcoal and for fishing grounds.

We observed many craters at first hand in the Boi Loi woods area. This had been an evergreen hardwood forest on the flat terrace northwest of Saigon. Most mature trees were dead from defoliation (herbicide spraying) but there was a very thick understory of useless broadleafed brush, vines, bamboo, and *Imperata* grass reaching a height of 15 to 20 feet. Craters were very numerous in this area and were scattered at least every 100 feet or so. Each crater was 20 to 30 feet across and 5 to 10 or more feet deep. They were all in a grey podzolic soil (a poor soil often formed in cool, humid climates) with poorly defined horizons (layers). There were many generations of craters. The most recent ones were bare of vegetation but contained a little rain water at the bottom. In the older ones a few sprigs of grass, probably *Imperata*, were sprouting in the center. (We also noted the beginning of plant growth in the center of some of the water-filled craters in the delta.) As the craters age the grass grows radially, covering the bottom, and finally grows up the sides to meet vines growing down from the peripheral vegetation. There is some filling of old craters with soil washed down from the sides, but this is limited because old craters completely covered with grass were still 5 to 10 feet deep. We did not observe any broadleafed plants invading these holes.

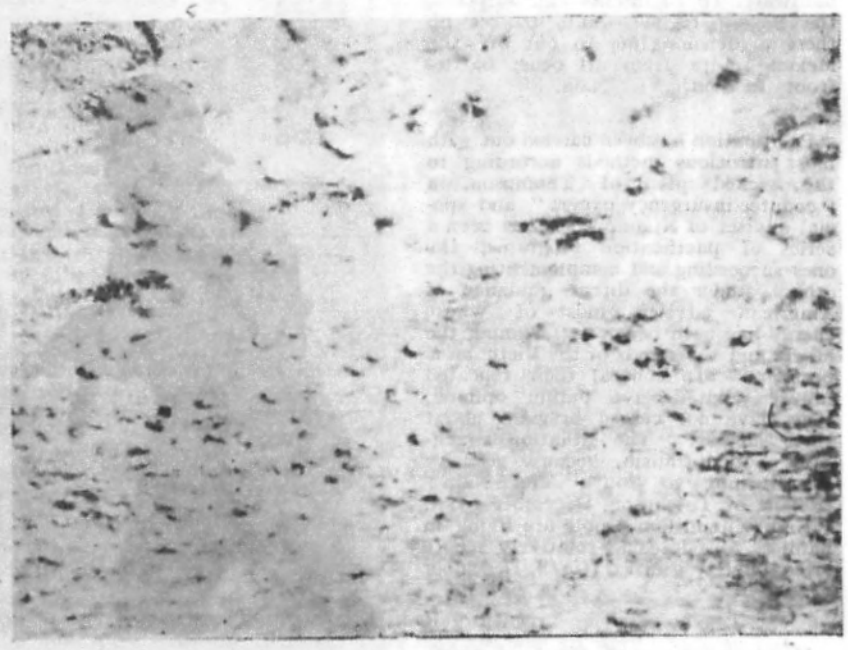
We were able to learn something of the effects of resources through interviews with loggers and saw mill operators and by inspection of damaged logs, mainly in the Ben Cat and Chon Thanh areas. We also interviewed South Viet Nam forestry officials about the problems of utilizing bombed forest areas. These officials indicated that loggers do not like to operate in bombed timber because the trees have metal fragments in them which greatly reduce the value of the logs. (One logger estimated that the price of logs containing metal is reduced by 30 percent). We could understand the reason for the reduced value when we observed piles of saws with teeth ripped out and examined discarded logs from which we dug pieces of metal. In some logs there were dead areas about twelve inches in diameter and six inches deep from which we recovered bomb fragments. We learned that when mature timber is punctured by metals such as steel shards of bullets, entry is provided for disease organisms probably fungi, which result in dead areas that increase in size as the wound ages. Thus, largely unlike trees in temperate zones, and trees of Viet Nam are susceptible to rot when penetrated by metal. This greatly decreases the value of the timber and also weakens trees so that they are much more subject to being blown down. An official of a French rubber plantation told us that he had lost many rubber trees on his plantation because the trees had been weakened by fungous infection following bomb damage and then blown down in one of the frequent violent wind storms that occur in the area. The loggers whom we interviewed said that the craters in the forest made passage very difficult for trucks and loaders, a situation that necessitated cutting much shorter logs than desirable in such areas. (We saw 90-foot logs coming out of undamaged forests).

We were able to observe from a high-flying helicopter the craters caused in a mountain forest near Da Nang by a B-52 strike about one and one-half years earlier. The craters were still obvious on the mountainside and along the ridges. The large burned areas in these forests appeared to be even more significant; they had apparently resulted from fires started by various types of ordnance such as white phosphorus, napalm, and flares.

We tentatively conclude that those cultivated areas hit heavily with conventional high explosives will be very difficult, if not impossible, to recultivate. They can perhaps be used as fish-rearing ponds or, in certain situations, as sources of freshwater for irrigation. They may provide additional breeding areas for insect vectors of disease. In the forested areas that have not been killed by chemical defoliation, the bombing has created problems that are probably just as great as those caused by defoliation. However, the immediate problem of greatest concern is the vast number of unexploded mines, bombs, rockets, and so forth, that must be removed if the land is to be resettled. Since the Department of Defense reports that approximately 1 to 2 percent of our air and ground munitions fail to explode, there are several hundred thousand of these randomly buried throughout Indochina.

We recommend studies to determine the relationship of water-filled craters to the spread of certain diseases, and to determine how cratered areas can best be rehabilitated. We also recommend that greatly expanded operations be initiated to locate and neutralize unexploded ordnance in agriculturally useful areas.

E.W. PFEIFFER



Our land riddlet with US bomb craters

Mekong delta in a turmoil

THE offensives and uprisings of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people since the beginning of the current rainy season have been devastating for US-Thieu "rural pacification" program, especially in the areas regarded by the enemy as its key targets.

"The communists are stepping up their activities throughout South Viet Nam," *AFP* reported on April 19, 1972, "and this is a new high never attained before, not even in the Mau Than Tet (1968)." "The communist offensive here is really developing into a vigorous mass movement which has many traits different from any other front" (*Reuter*). "It (the war) is happening in a strange way in the delta, slowly and small piece by small piece" (*UPI*, April 27).

Those are some of striking characteristics of the commotion gripping the vast countryside of South Viet Nam in general and in the Mekong delta in particular, as observed by many Western correspondents.

The Mekong delta is the most populous and also richest area of South Viet Nam. The US aggressors and their agents have been making the biggest efforts to pacify this region and turn it into their safe rear therefrom to scrape up manpower and wealth and drag out and expand the US aggression. Apart from the "civil guard," "militia" and "territorial security force," the US and Saigon commands have garrisoned there three main-force divisions as permanent home-guard force to support the pacification effort. It is covered by a dense system of posts and strongholds, a series of military subsectors and "strategic sectors" together with a large mobile force and a considerable quantity of hardware. To all intents and purposes, the Saigon regime wants to set up there a defence line to cut off the Mekong delta from all other battlefronts in South Viet Nam.

Pacification has been carried out with most atrocious methods according to the wicked plan of Thompson, a "counter-insurgency expert" and special adviser of Nixon. There has been a series of pacification programs, the ones succeeding and complementing the others, under the direct guidance of American advisers most of whose energy has been bent on "winning the hearts and the minds of the Vietnamese peasants." To conceal their repeated failures and deceive public opinion, they have not ceased bragging about their success. "The situation vouchsafes our optimism, because security is returning to South Viet Nam" (Report of Thompson, December 1969). "Eighteen million people are living in hamlets considered as relatively secure or completely pacified (*USIS*, December 14, 1969).

However, the truth has been partly revealed by many Western journalists when reporting military news especially in the Mekong delta during the recent past. "The Mekong delta which used to be the quietest place is at present a place where the revolutionary flame is flaring up higher than ever before." "According to American pacification leaders, Ca Mau and Can Tho are two provinces where the situation is the gloomiest." "The Communists are in control of most of Can Tho province and the situation there is very gloomy." (*International Herald Tribune, UPI, AFP*, April 24, 27, 1972).

In April this year alone, in co-ordination with the tide of offensives and uprisings across South Viet Nam the armed forces and people in the Mekong delta stepped up their attacks, erasing one after another three strategic sectors and military subsectors, four regimental operational bases, putting out of action eleven infantry and artillery battalions, and multi company "civil guard" units and 36 other companies totalling more than 15,000 men. The US-Saigon pacification support force weakened substantially. The three Divisions 7, 9, 21, the "work horse" of the pacification program in the region, repeatedly took heavy blows and all of them were badly depleted. The 32nd and 33rd Regiments of the 21st Division were battered in Ca Mau and before they recovered, were sent as a "fire brigade" to Binh Long and Tay Ninh. The two remaining Divisions 7 and 9, have proved unable to cope with the widespread guerilla warfare. Eight battalions of these two divisions have been wiped out or heavily trounced within a short period. In a single day, the whole 12th Regiment of Division 7 took a serious beating when it was sent to relieve the positions and posts south of the Plain of Reeds.

Remarkable has been the continual development of guerilla warfare with the number of guerilla units doubling or even trebling compared with the past. Within only twenty days and nights of fighting, the regional liberation troops forced the surrender or evacuation of 358 posts. The drive against enemy posts has been making headway. A *UPI* correspondent cabled on May 22 that the situation in the Mekong delta was deteriorating day by day. Here the (quisling) government lost an average of ten outposts a week.

The wave of mutinies, revolts, desertions and disbandments has been steadily expanding among the Saigon troops. Seventy rebellions resulting in the destruction of 55 posts, more than one hundred collective anti-war actions staged by Saigon units from company size upward, three thousand desertions in one month, are significant figures.

The *Baltimore Sun* on April 16, 1972 noted that the credibility gap was "being widely observed after two weeks of offensive of the Communists." The garrisons of more than 45 "militia" posts in the Mekong Delta simply disappeared. This bears out the lamentable failure of the US-Saigon scheme to develop and consolidate the "territorial force" in order to carry out pacification in the inner perimetre while detailing part of the main-force units to cope with the liberation forces in the outer perimeter. Never has the US-Saigon command been so seriously troubled by the dilemma of concentration and dispersion of troops, either course of action being fraught with fatal perils.

The actions of the armed forces and people in the Mekong delta has swept away important chunks of the pacification system and of the coercive machine of the US and its stooges, breaking their defence line in many areas. Their sinister scheme to impress youths and "upgrade" those in the "militia" and "civil guards" into the regular forces has also failed bitterly.

Never before have the mass uprisings to seize control and smash the machine of constraint and oppression of the enemy risen to such a level. Right in the first round of the confrontation, it made a substantial gain. Nearly one million people in the Mekong delta have become again masters of a vast liberated area covering nearly 1,000 square miles in three provinces bordering West Nam Bo and many other areas along Highway 4 and in the provinces bordering the Plain of Reeds.

The successes of the liberation forces and people in the Mekong delta in the recent past have changed very quickly the balance of force between the revolution and the enemy in this populous plain. With the vast area newly liberated, the Mekong delta has been provided with new jumping-off places and has quickly increased its striking force right behind the enemy lines. The war situation is changing rapidly, supplying more facilities for the armed forces and people in the Mekong delta in their fierce struggle with the enemy.

The enemy are losing heavily on many fronts. The US-Thieu gang have been forced to throw half of the strength of their three main-force divisions garrisoned in this region to the rescue of their mates in other places. The remaining force is getting thrashed or pinned down in a number of areas at the Cambodian border. Their defence system in the Mekong delta is exposing many vulnerable points, the morale of their troops is irremediably sinking. It is a new factor which the patriots will not fail to exploit to press their attacks more vigorously and help defeat the criminal pacification program, the main measure of "Vietnamization."

The Dac Can enemy position overrun and occupied by the Kontum PLAF

The eight fighters on Yen Ngua hill

THAT day five liberation soldiers fell in with one another in a rubber plantation near Thanh Binh crossroad, Route 13. They had no time yet to acquaint themselves with one another when three combatants with pistols and Tommy guns ran toward them. Their names: Khuyen, Them and Luc.

After seconds of hesitation, Khuyen said:

"News just came that enemy Battalion 6, Brigade 1, stationed at the foot of Hill Yen Ngua, had called for choppers to help it get out of here. A good opportunity to wipe it out. We should join forces."

The five liberation fighters did not know which unit he whom they were talking with belonged to. They only vaguely remembered to have met him when they first deployed in the current operation. Not waiting for Khuyen to say another word, they rearranged their outfits, unlocking their safety triggers and cleaning their bayonets.

Khuyen urged:

"We're about seven kilometres from the enemy position. We should hurry up or we'll miss them."

They reached the hill foot an hour later, exactly at 7.25 a.m. on the 22nd of April.

Thiem, a scout, found out an appropriate position from where to get a good view of the scene.

"Paratroops in variegated clothes stood helter-skelter in a clearing near thick baskets," Thiem said with a distinct voice. "Two HU-1As and two more choppers were skimming just over the ground."

At once Thu and Hoa let off mortar shells on the mercenaries. Taken unawares, they fled disorderly, many hung on to chopper skids. The eight liberation fighters fired mortar and Tommy gun bullets and hurled handgrenades and explosive charges. A dozen were killed or wounded, and an HU-1A hit. The other helicopters took off hastily, leaving the shouting paratroops to their own fate.

Hardly had the drone of choppers faded away when flights of fighter-planes, in successive waves, zeroed in and bombed the emplacement of the eight people's combatants. But as soon as they disappeared the latter resumed the attack, throwing the adversary into utter confusion.

Khuyen, Thu and Hoa manned the main prong while Luc outflanked the paratroops with his B-40 and their other comrades drove them to a muddy place with submachine guns and grenades. Khuyen called then mercenaries to surrender but in vain. Thereupon from a bush Luc and his mates sprang up into the enemy formation, killed most of its men, and captured three along with 19 rifles and a wireless set.

Dien Khanh military centre flattened within minutes

DIEN Khanh district is a little over 6 miles East of Nha Trang provincial capital and 12 miles South of the Cam Ranh military base.

The enemy position was surrounded outside by from 7 to 8 fences of barbed wire entanglements and inside by a 24 feet-high rampart on which blockhouses were planted 50 to 80 yards apart. It was defended by several units of "civil guards", "volunteers", "popular self-defence forces" and a thick network of scouts.

In close coordination with the local armed forces and people's offensives and uprisings, Infantry Detachment A and Artillery Detachment B of Unit X of the regional army in Khanh Hoa province was ordered to penetrate into the area. Every man in the unit was filled with anticipation and sense of purpose.

After getting over many obstacles on their way, the liberation fighters arrived at the site in due time.

It was 0.25 a.m.

"Stand ready," Lung, the commanding officer, whispered to Tanh, leader of Group One.

While Lung was shaking hands with the B-41 gunner and other men, the enemy suddenly shot up 3 flares.

All the fighters immediately flattened themselves on the ground, keeping an eye on the two blockhouses on an approach to the bridge. Right after the flares went out, the patriotic forces, as quick as squirrels, dashed across the airfield, through the barbed wire fences and came close to the rampart foot. Lung again checked his unit.

Group One led by Tranh quickly crossed the rampart and fell on the district head's residence.

Next, Nhu's group charged the left row of houses with petard and Tho's group those on the right, in a 3-prong action.

Lien hurled 2 hand-grenades at one of the blockhouses, while Xuan assaulted a nearby barrack. Khien and Bach, the two B-41 gunners, with only three shots, put out of action the 3 other blockhouses on both ends of the bridge, thereby paralysing the adverse southern defence system.

After demolishing the district governor's house with a hand grenade and a B-40 shell, Binh received orders to fall back.

Thanh struck at 12 other targets in the 4 remaining houses with petards and grenades.

The enemy troops inside the centre could not give one another support while our men freely moved about in the area.

From the western side, Group One led by Phong swiftly wiped out the remaining houses after destroying an enemy one-storeyed building.

At that moment, the enemy tried to mount a barrage of 105 mm guns, but the latter were immediately silenced by the PLAF artillery fire.

As the enemy in the outer perimeter had spotted our gun emplacements, they divided themselves into two prongs and attempted a thrust in.

Detachment B leader Giang though wounded continued to spur on his men: "At any cost, we must give support to our friendly unit and help it completely knock out the enemy."

Hoc, the gunner number One, fired a salvo of 20 shells. And the group in charge of defending Ung and Phong's guns fought with grimness and repulsed all the enemy offensives.

Thus, after a few minutes of fierce fighting, late on the night of April 13, 1972, Detachments A and B of Unit X of the regional army in Khanh Hoa province entirely blotted out the Dien Khanh military centre, killing 72 enemy troops, wounding many others including several wicked thugs, destroying or shooting afire 24 barracks, a bunker, 4 blockhouses, and wrecking two 105 mm artillery pieces.

A "retreat"

The Saigon paper **Cong Luan** *(Public Opinion) in its May 6-7 issue, carried the following article by its correspondent T.H.T. who had had a narrow escape in Quang Tri. T.H.T. told of the dire straits of US advisors and Saigon officers and men of the 3rd Division who on May 1st took to their heels in a real stampede:*

...SHOULD I relate all the details of the "retreat" from Quang Tri occurring on May 1st, at 1.30 p.m.? I don't know exactly how I could escape death and come back in Saigon to my family and friends.

My chief editor sent me to Hue on April 29 and from there I proceeded on my own to Quang Tri on April 30. As soon as I arrived in Hue, local pressmen advised me not to go to Quang Tri. But it would look awkward if I returned to Saigon empty-handed. What I still remember very clearly is that, once arrived at the CP of the 3rd division, I had to take cover in an underground shelter because of adverse (PLAF) poundings. From a signal officer (I don't know whether he is now still alive or dead) I got the latest news on the fighting.

I spent a sleepless night on April 30, kept awake by the explosions of hostile artillery and the din of our jets.

I noticed that General Giai and Colonel Chung, deputy commander of the 3rd Division, could not sleep either nor the signal officer. General Giai was no longer in good spirits as he used to be. The whole night of April 30 thus passed by and I didn't even know when daybreak came.

The signal officer patting his thigh whispered into my ears: "Very important news."

"What's that?" I asked him. "An enemy attack?"

The officer replied briefly that the General (Giai) had summoned all the commanding officers for an emergency meeting. The reason for this apparently could not be communicated to me, but judging fron the anxiety on the signal officer's face, I had the feeling that something particularly important was about to happen. Anyhow, the officer had to let the cat out of the bag because "the moment of truth has come."

When it was 11 a.m. withdrawing orders were given. I didn't know the reason nor the source. Neither did I know by what means the retreat would be operated. Two foreign correspondents were walking up and down, and entered the US advisers' room while preparations were being made even by high-ranking officers of the division CP.

Airplanes were roaring in the sky and a Chinook helicopter was about to land in a desert meadow in front of the CP. Among those emplaned, were, on the US side, the advisers to the 3rd Division, the marines and the rangers, and the two correspondents, and, on the Vietnamese side, General Giai and Colonel Chung.

As the helicopter took off, an indescribable anxiety cast a gloom over the faces of the remaining officers: they had to shift for themselves now.

The calmest of all then was Major Duc Hung, chief of operational staff. He was standing near me and told me: "Yes we have to fend for ourselves."

As I turned round I saw on my left a captain and a lieutenant named Binh who said to me: "Why didn't you take the helicopter with the General? As for us, you know, we have to depend on our fate."

After the PLAF onset, the plight of the US-paid Saigon soldiery

Then, he dragged me into a M-113 tank, which was already full up. The vehicle moved out of the CP, but after a few minutes it was unable to advance on Highway No One, for the adversary's artillery seemed to take this highway as its sole target. The M-113 was forced to plough its way to another road over half a mile away from Highway No 1. Looking back, I saw a real stampede of the "retreating" infantrymen. They used any transport they might lay hold on. They ran on highways, now eastward, now westward. There were no more commanding officers: everyone was fleeing for dear life, and all were trying to put a great distance between them and Quang Tri town as rapidly as possible.

CONVOYS KEEP ROLLING UNDER DELUGES OF US HARDWARE

ONCE again the whole underground shelter of Battalion 24 rocked like a hammock. Commander Phan Thanh Tong stood up, put on his steel helmet then said to deputy political commissar Nguyen Ta Chu: "I'm going down to Company No 3. Don't forget to tell Toi to stay with the bulldozer group. We'll have a hell of a night."

"It's now 16.00 hours," Chu approvingly answered. "In only ten hours, there have been already 35 bombings by coordinates, and five B-52 strikes. They want to defy us, don't they? We'll give them a lesson!"

A bell rang. Chu lifted his telephone. He recognized a familiar voice — that of Dinh Thang Vi, the commander of Company No 3: "Hello! What! Again three shells on the road surface? Listen, Comrade Vy! We are expecting the toughest fight ever for tonight at C. You remember what resolution our battalion has taken? 'We'll stick to the road as long as we live, or else we'll die a heroic death!' Members of Battalion 24 may have to shed their blood, but traffic through C. shall not be stopped. I wanted to go with him. Commander Tong is going down to your unit, but political commissar On is ill, so I am to stay on duty!"

On the road, after an inspection, Battalion Commander Phan Thanh Tong — a determined-to-win fighter — reminded the various units of their respective assignments: "We the engineer corps, we have to go by this principle: The highest results with the smallest force, no fear of sacrifices in life, but no unnecessary sacrifices."

Again deafening detonations of bombs dropped by coordinates. A cloud of dust was raised. The engineers did not even take the trouble of removing the dust on their clothes. "That's another one, the 6th in only one hour," said one of them. "So many bombs they have been dumping in the day time. Sure they'll drop more at night!" commented another.

The battalion commander went on to say: "We have to clear the damage of all the bombings this morning. As you all know, there have been up to now 12 bombs fallen just on the road surface in zone A, while a section 600 feet long in zone B has been now ploughed up beyond recognition. Comrades Doc, political commissar, and Vy, commander of Company No 3, will be responsible for the mobilization of the engineers. Comrades Boi, Phuong, Vy and I will see to Zone A; Comrade Toi, deputy-commander of the battalion, Comrade Nhuong, political commissar of the bulldozer company, and Comrade Nha, driver, will look after zone B."

All jobs started at 17.15 hours. 2 hours and 15 minutes later, zone B had completed half of its task, and zone B had only 4 bomb craters left. But right at that moment, B-52 planes came in and showered bombs on C. The air was filled with dust. Dust mixed with sweat stuck to everyone's face, nose, hands, so much so that no one could be recognized but by his voice. A few minutes later, at the CP of the battalion, deputy political commissar Chu received a report: "All comrades safe. Only bulldozer driver Truong Thanh Nha had a foot hurt by a stone. Condition of the road: 5 more bomb craters at A, only minor damage caused to B."

Chu was not much anxious about A, as he knew Tong and Vy were already there — two officers particularly expert in guessing the enemy's intentions and in achieving the highest efficiency with the smallest amount of manpower.

As a matter of fact, at B everyone was busy with his work. Privates Dung, Thap, Diep were running to and fro bringing explosives to their mates. The "mine" group now removed an earth mole, now displaced a tree stump to clear the way for the bulldozer. Group Commander Duong Cong Thu and "determined-to-win" fighter Hoang Xuan Do, were directing their men to flatten the road surface with pickaxes and shovels. The work was near completion, when 9 flying fortresses rumbled in. But for an unknown reason — technical hindrances or inadequate prior reconnaissance — all the 9 B-52s missed their targets. The engineers felt all the more happy and said to themselves that barring unforeseeable occurrences, traffic would be restored in one hour's time.

A few minutes' rest was ordered by the battalion commander. While our troops were taking their meal, a flash of lightning was seen then a flight of jets nose dived. Mechanically everybody lay flat on the ground for a few seconds then stood up again. Nobody here was scared by this sort of game. Work was immediately resumed. Nguyen Tien Bo jumped again on his bulldozer. As it advanced, the road surface re-appeared. Visibly pleased with what they had done, the soldiers cracked jokes: "Last year we were only a bare-footed soccer team, now we have grown into a booted team, so we can kick the Yanks harder!"

Cheers and applauses erupted here and there. The road was again crowded with workers.

The battle between Battalion 24 and the US airforce was closely followed by higher echelons since never before had the Yanks flung such a swarm of aircraft against a road portion of only 6,000 feet in length. Deputy-commander of the battalion Le Toi telephoned a concise report to the CP: "Five more bombs have hit the road surface. We've taken the resolution to clear the way within tonight."

On the spot, Company Commander Dinh Hong Vi rallied his men. After consultation with the political commissar, he made up his mind not to marshall more troops and not to ask for reinforcements from friendly units. He listed one by one the jobs to be done and assigned them to his men: "Diet and Do would be in charge of the mines. Thap and Dung were to level the road surface. Thu was to plant signs to guide the bulldozer. When the unit first arrived at C, signs were usually made of wood. Then as the Yanks intensified their bombing, no more trees were left, and Company No 3 had to use bamboo instead. Then shortage of bamboo was felt as those plants were also destroyed by US bombs. The resourceful Battalion 24 then discovered a new kind of material—US parachute cloth. That proved to be inexhaustible. And tonight Thu's job was to run ahead of the bulldozer and spread a parachute cloth on the ground for the bulldozer to move forward.

02.30 a.m. the battalion commander was about to shoot up a flare to announce that traffic was reopened when suddenly B-52s came again with their charge of bombs. 6 bomb craters were cut on the road surface. For the first time that night, the commanding group of Battalion 24 had to exchange views through their walkies-talkies:

Nguyen Ba Chu: It is going to be daybreak in two hours, so what's your opinion?

Phan Thanh Tong: Everybody is now exhausted, myself I am dog tired, but we should urge all the comrades to carry on.

Nguyen Ba Chu: Need substitutes? Need anything?

Le Toi: No substitutes, and for the time being no reinforcement. We have to save strength for a longer effort.

Nguyen Ba Chu: That means I can send this report to the High Command: "We are resolved to get traffic going on road C. within tonight?"

Phan Thanh Tong, Le Toi: Agreed, agreed!

Putting down the receiver, Battalion Commander Tong turned to his men: Comrades, dawn is coming, we the booted soccer team, are we going to accept defeat in this battle?"

"No, no, certainly not!" replied the soldiers in chorus. Then each one remind his assigned job. Truong Thanh Nha and Nguyen Tien Bo removed with diligence the buckets filled with earth and stones. Nine detonations seemed to be more deafening. At 04.20, the last bomb crater was filled up. A long convoy wormed its way through the danger spot. Its head stopped at C. and asked: "Absolute safety guaranteed?"

"Yes, absolute safety," was the reply.

"And all of us, the 17 people who took part in the fight, we are also safe!"

"Splendid! What a beautiful piece of work! 58 raids by coordinates, 9 of them involving 27 B-52s, pouring down altogether 1,000 tons of bombs, and all this has been unable to stop our traffic. We drivers have to take off our hats to the gallant engineers of Battalion 24!"

NGUYEN TRAN THIET

In a single battle, 2 enemy vessels were damaged and set afire by a Haiphong coastal artillery unit

The DRVN **in brief** * The DRVN **in brief**

o The Viet Nam People's Army High Command has sent a message commending the Ha Bac army and people for having downed 4 US piratical aircraft including the 3,600th one grounded so far in North Viet Nam.

The VNPA High Command also recommended them to uphold their "determined to fight and to win" spirit, strike harder and win bigger successes in the effort to foil the US aggressors' criminal military adventure.

o In response to the appeal of the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee and the DRVN Government, and in execution of the VNPA High Command's order, all the Navy units are heightening their vigilance, enthusiastically taking part in the training and stiffening their resolve "to score direct hits at the enemy vessels in the first rounds."

o The "Determined to Win" Infantry Column has launched a "Nothing is more precious than independence" drive of political studies. All the units have pledged to emulate one another in recording combat exploits. They have paid particular importance to the training of gunners and battery crews to attack enemy warships, aircraft and ground forces.

o Infantry Column 2 of the Red River Left Bank Military Zone has initiated a "Whole column look toward the frontline" movement with a view to achieving the highest results in the training, in the shortest period of time, and actively made full preparations for action.

o Militiamen and self-defence forces in coastal areas and on Cat Ba and Do Son Islands (Haiphong) have built more "bolts." and are zealously training. They have staged combined manoeuvres between the army and people's police armed forces in order to keep the initiative in all eventualities and to readily wipe out the enemy.

Self-defence units on boats and barges, equipped with more weapons have been getting ready to weave a dense flak on the enemy when they come.

o Recently Minister of Transports and Communication Phan Trong Tue, visited the Soviet workers and seamen now under treatment at the VN-USSR Friendship Hospital.

The Soviet wounded sincerely thanked the Vietnamese people for their devoted care and medical treatment, and strongly condemned the US imperialists attacks on the DRVN and foreign ships anchored at her ports.

Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications Nam Hai also visited officers and seamen of two Chinese ships, *Hung Ki No* 152 and 160, hit by US aircraft and war vessels on May 1 and 7.

The Chinese crew members were greatly appreciative of the concern and care given them by the Vietnamese people and DRVN Ministry of Transport and Communications. They also came out strongly against the US frenzied onsets on the DRVN, mining and blockade of North Vietnamese ports.

Cambodia:

VICTORY OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

ACCORDING to *AKI*, in the recent dry season (October 1971 — April 1972), the Cambodian armed forces and people killed, wounded or captured 56,000 enemy troops, among them 4,000 Saigonese soldiers and many junior and senior officers. The Phnom Penh army's 46th and 58th Regiments were put out of actions. 40 battalions including 3 battalions and tanks units, and hundreds of companies of Lon Nol troops were either destroyed or decimated ; 320 military vehicles, half of them tanks, were destroyed, and 72 aircraft of different types shot down or destroyed. The Cambodian armed forces and people seized 4,500 weapons and 350 tons of munitions, razed to the ground or forced the enemy to abandon 220 military outposts and further enlarged the liberated zone.

The 1971-1972 dry season closed with a great and resounding victory for the Cambodian people, not only in the military but also in the political fields, victory of great national and international significance. For the enemy, this was a failure of strategic importance, so heavy that no measure could help him turn the tide and extricate himself from his impasse and eventual doom.

The brilliant victories won by the Cambodian armed forces and people in the recent dry season have brought about important turns in the war situation in Cambodia.

By completely foiling Operation Tchenla 2 conducted by the enemy along Route 6, inflicting crushing defeats on the Saigon and Lon Nol puppet troops on the Route 7 front in Northeastern Cambodia, encircling and isolating Phnom Penh and making deep and powerful strikes in regions Southeast and South of Phnom Penh close to the Viet Nam border, the Cambodian armed forces and people successively inflicted heavy punches on the puppet main-force units whose combat strength had been reduced beyond recovery, and at the same time stepped up guerilla warfare in many sectors, repelled the enemy and seized control of many key areas, cut off communication lines, and encircled and isolated many province and district capitals, thus sowing great panic and confusion among the enemy troops.

More important still was that since the middle of the dry season, the Phnom Penh puppet troops had totally lost the initiative following the destruction of an important part of their strategic mobile forces by the patriotic forces. Along with their heavy casualties, their morale and their organization were at their lowest ebb. *AFP* observed May 13 that General Lon Nol's army had been unable to resist its adversary. For nearly a month now, there had been no knowing about the fate of many of its units.

The Cambodian armed forces and people have swept the enemy troops out of many areas of Sveyrieng, Preyveng, Kampot Thom, Kompong Speu and other provinces, further enlarged the liberated zone which forms a long stretch running from North to South, and covering 8/10 of the national territory with rich resources and a large population. The liberated zone in Cambodia now adjoins that in Laos and in South Viet Nam, thus creating a common strategic position very favourable for the anti-US fight of the three Indochinese peoples.

While the American forces involved in operations in Cambodia have weakened considerably, the Phnom Penh puppet troops are unable to carry the war burden and are losing more and more of their fighting capability, and the Saigonese puppet troops have been seriously mauled by the Cambodian PNLAF fighting in close coordination with the SVN PLAF, to the point that they have virtually lost their strategic effectiveness on the Cambodian battlefield, the Cambodian PNLAF have grown visibly and become fully mature. They are serving as the mainstay of the heroic resistance war of the Cambodian people against the US aggressors and the Lon Nol-Sirik-Matak-Son Ngoc Thanh puppet clique. All the three categories of armed forces are fast growing, both in number and quality, in combat capability as well as in equipment. The Cambodian PNLAF firmly hold the initiative, have great fighting capacity and are strong enough to launch large-scale and sustained offensives in a vast theatre of operation.

The glaring victories won by the Cambodian armed forces and people in the recent dry season have dealt a heavy blow at the Nixon doctrine, making the US scheme to use Indochinese to fight Indochinese a bankruptcy. With the irremediable collapse of the Phnom Penh puppet army, the US aggressors are running into new difficulties on the Cambodian battlefield. Far from being able to serve as a shock force for the Americans on the Indochinese battlefield, the Saigon puppet troops are being hard pressed on all battlefronts and are disintegrating by big chunks. Defeatism is widespread in the ranks of the American stooges. While the American bosses are voicing profound pessimism over the impotence of their valets, the latter feel increased disbelief in the emergency measures taken by their masters and are being torn by inner strife in their perilous position. Lon Nol, Sirik Matak and Son Ngoc Thanh have exposed themselves as traitors to the nation. Their regime is running into a deep crisis and its weakness keeps aggravating, *AFP* put it.

In Cambodian cities and towns, especially in Phnom Penh, the people, more and more fed up with the Americans and their valets, are opposing them with firmer resolve and many have joined the NUFK. This has landed the clique of traitors into still greater isolation.

The new brilliant victories of the Cambodian armed forces and people are giving a strong stimulus to the people of the three Indochinese countries in general and to the South Vietnamese people in particular in their current offensive and uprising.

We warmly greet these outstanding feats of arms of the heroic Cambodian armed forces and people, and are convinced that the great victories achieved in the 1971-1972 dry season are laying a firm foundation for still greater victories for the people of Indochina in their fight against US aggression and for national liberation.

Laos:

A Thai mercenaries' position in Laos flattened by the Lao PLA

A SEASON OF BIG GAINS

ACCORDING to *KPL*, between November 1971 and April 1972, the Lao patriotic forces put out of action 13,847 enemy including 4,265 Thai mercenaries and a certain number of GIs, wiped out or decimated 43 battalions including 19 battalions of Thai troops, downed or shattered on the ground 109 aircraft, captured or put out of commission 4,000 arms of various types and recovered vast areas involving hundreds of thousands of inhabitants.

It was a dry season of big gains and a hard punch dealt at the "Nixon doctrine" in Laos with the formula : "Vang Pao Special forces + Thai mercenaries + US air support." It was also the most stunning blow at the Thai mercenaries since their dispatch to Laos to serve as shock troops and strategic reserve forces for that front.

One could be recalled the resounding successes of the Lao people's armed forces in smashing the "Kou Kiet" campaign of the US-puppets in the 1969-1970 dry season and frustrating the "Lam Son 719" operation involving nearly 50,000 US and Saigon troops in the Highway 9-Southern Lao area, in the 1970-1971 dry season, and in the recent attacks, against enemy drives into the Plain of Jars-Muong Soui, Saravane, Ban Nhik, etc.

The Lao patriots' brilliant successes in the dry season disclose that the initiative of action remains in the hands of the Lao people and their liberation forces.

The quick growth and maturing of the Lao people's armed forces have been tangibly proved by their powerful assaults on the the Plain of Jars-Muong Soui area through the good coordination of the various arms and services, the deep thrusts of the infantry and the intense and highly effective shell fire of the artillery on enemy hideouts in Sam Thong-Long Cheng. Besides, the Lao liberation forces have captured a great number of Vang Pao bandits and Thai mercenaries. Guerilla warfare has become stronger and wider, and has spread deep inside the areas under enemy control.

The enemy had to fall back to defend the remaining bases along the Mekong river. The picture of the revolutionary war on all the three Indochinese battlefronts is brighter than ever before. Nixon, albeit very obdurate and crafty, cannot escape from complete fiasco.

THE THIRD WORLD IN EFFERVESCENCE

Thailand

On May 23, a company of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment of the Thanom-Praphas clique deployed in a terror raid near the town of Pua in Nan province ran into an ambush by the patriotic armed forces. 64 of the troops were killed right away and 34 others wounded.

Earlier, from mid-April to the first days of May, Thai patriotic armed forces had ambushed enemy troops or sprung surprise assaults on enemy posts in Sakhorn, Nakhorn, Songkhla, Surat and Thani. Many casualties were reported and many positions razed to the ground, and a large quantity of weapons and military equipment seized.

Malaysia :

The People's Liberation Army laid an ambush on April 26 on a ranger unit of the reactionary administration in Lundu district, 90 miles north of Sarawak, killing 15 adverse men and injuring 6 others. The deputy governor of Sarawak described it as the heaviest reverse of the government forces since 1969.

Palestine :

Palestinian liberation forces launched in the two days of April 12 and 13 four attacks on Israeli aggressor troops in Golan and the Sinai Peninsula, inflicting 10 casualties. They also destroyed 3 military vehicles and levelled many barracks.

Uruguay :

In April, the Tuparamos disposed of 4 high-ranking officials of the reactionary administration, and succeeded in freeing 30 patriots and other people from detention.

Argentina :

On April 27, guerillas put to death two reactionary policemen in Lio Tala. They also wounded the chief constable and a sergeant.

Continued opposition to Nixon

Support for Viet Nam

In Philippines, students' action against the Nixon's war

THE last days of May saw the continuation of the world people's condemnation of the frantic escalation of the Nixon administration in Viet Nam, and of their vigorous support and sympathy for the Vietnamese people.

Premier Kim Il Sung, Premier Fidel Castro, Vice-Premier Li Hsien-nien, President S. Allende, President Anwar Sadat, President H. El Astad, Presidential Council Chairman Salem Pabai Ali, President Nierere, President Sekou Toure, Premier Gandhi, State Council President Ceausescu, Chairman Souphanouvong and President Y. Arafat, all raised their voices against Nixon's moves and urged Nixon to put an immediate end to them. On the other hand, they reiterated their unfailing sympathy and support for the Vietnamese people's resistance against the US aggression and for national salvation.

The 3rd Seminar on US Genocide in Viet Nam, held in Cuba, closed with the approval of a 14-point statement, which made a thorough appraisal and strong criticism of the war of aggression conducted by US imperialism against the Indochinese countries, especially the use of chemical and other mass extermination weapons like B-52 strategic bombers, incendiary bombs and demolition bombs for genocide, biocide and culturocide. Representatives of progressives in the United States and such Latin American countries as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Panama expressed their respect, love and solidarity for the Vietnamese people and the other peoples of Indochina now confronting US imperialism — the common enemy of all nations — and fighting for self-liberation.

An ad-hoc international conference of solidarity with the Indochinese peoples was held in Cairo with the participation of 54 delegations representing various international organizations, of national organizations for Asian-African solidarity and for solidarity with Indochina, and of national liberation movements.

Speakers all strongly scored Nixon's naval blockade and wanton air strikes against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and ruthless extermination war against the Indochinese countries. They also firmly insisted that US imperialism stop all criminal activities against the peoples of this peninsula. Series of meetings and demonstrations, meanwhile, broke out in many countries. Rallies were held by the 50,000 members of the Free German Youth League and the Ernst Thaelmann Young Pioneers in the GDR and by workers in Ulan Bator, Mongolia, to show their solidarity with Viet Nam and stigmatize Nixon. In Czechoslovakia, 12,000 inhabitants of Kromermit demonstrated in the rain against Nixon, and the Bordejovsky army unit, which had performed great deeds in World War II, collected 30,000 kcs and blood for Viet Nam.

In Algeria, Syria, Mali, Pakistan, the Philippines, Venezuela, and Colombia, the people staged protest actions against Nixon's crimes and for US pull-out from Viet Nam. Two anti-US demonstrations erupted within three days in Karachi, Pakistan. The US Embassy in Manila faced 3 demonstrations within 6 days. In Afghanistan, a group of 23 people issued a statement against Nixon. The unions of Japanese employees at American military bases announced their intention to boycott any jobs that serve US air strikes on Viet Nam, and 230 Japanese scientists held an ad-hoc conference against the US aggression in Viet Nam. In Chile, alongside the many mammoth mass meetings, 100 congressmen made public a strong statement against Nixon, the war maniac.

Similar outbursts were also reported again and again in France, Britain, Italy, West Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Australia, West Berlin, etc. During a demonstration in Austria, protestors, among them the son of Chancellor, tore to pieces a US flag and shouted anti-Nixon slogans. Demonstrations kept breaking out all through Nixon's stay in the country. In Norway the US Embassy in Oslo had to close down and evacuate on May 26 under the impact of the rising anger of the people for alleged "security" reasons. Bombs were exploded on many occasions at US army headquarters and billets in West Germany and France, causing many American casualties.

In the *United States*, meetings and demonstrations were staged in front of the Pentagon and the Capitol and in many cities and at many military bases. 150 well-known scientists, artists and writers went to the Capitol with a petition for an immediate end to all US military activities in Indochina. Bombs were let off at two buildings in Columbia University, New York City, where researches were being made for the Pentagon and the CIA for the war in Viet Nam. In Philadelphia, demonstrators wrecked three C-130 cargo planes. The reactionary authorities reacted rabidly by arresting hundreds of people including D. Dellinger, Prof. Robert Lifton, painter Larry Rivers, singer Collins, and many other public figures.

The press in the United States and elsewhere in the world went on levelling severe criticisms at Nixon's desperate war escalation pointing out that Nixon's brinkmanship would push him further down the abyss of failure. It stressed that with his criminal intensification of the war whatever and wherever he may speak about "peace," he would only further expose his own bellicosity, ferocity and hypocrisy.

World Peace Council

calls for Viet Nam campaign

THE Group of the World Peace Council's Presidency on May 24 and 25, 1972 met in Brnssels, capital of Belgium. Among those attending the Conference was Mme Phan Ninh Hien, representing the South Viet Nam Peace Committee.

On the Indochinese issue, the Conference adopted a statement and petition on the programme of action.

The statement said: "The expansion of the US aggressive war against the Vietnamese people has grossly violated all the norms of international law, and marked a new stage in the US Government's policy of war provocation and aggression.

With the increasing use of US air and naval force, Nixon has shown that to attain nis objectives, he does not hesitate to strike at the civilian population."

After pointing out that the US imperialists' frenzied war escalation surely is unable to break the Vietnamese people's fighting will and prevent them from winning new victories in their struggle for national liberation, the statement energetically condemned the US aggressive war and criminal acts, and pressed for an immediate and unconditional end to the bombing of the DRVN and the blockade and mining of North Viet Nam's ports. It demanded that the US stop sabotaging the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, resume the talks on the basis of the RSVN PRG 7-point proposal, promptly withdraw all American ground, naval and air forces from the Indochinese countries and let tne Indochinse people settle their own affairs without foreign interference.

The World Peace Council called on the people throughout the world to intensify the common struggle against the US imperialists' aggression, condemn the US Governments's warlike policy and denounce Nixon's political manoeuvres designed to deceiving world public opinion.

The W.P.C. called on MPs, intellectuals and massorganizations the world over to take measures to pressure their governments into urging the Nixon administration to end the aggressive war in Indochina.

The W.P.C. called for world-scale campaign of solidarity with and support for the Indochinese people's anti-US, pro-national salvation fight.

The W.P.C. voiced its full backing to the Indochinese people's struggle against US aggression till complete victory.

WARNING BOMBS

IN his "search for peace" trip, the blood-thirsty hawk Nixon on May 30 landed in Teheran, capital of Iran. Greeting him, over 10 bombs exploded from late in the night of that day till early next morning, shaking the city and its vicinity.

The bomb blasts took place near a mausoleum where Nixon was to come to lay wreaths, on a road in the centre of the city, in front of the US Information Service, before the US 'drinks' processing factory, broke off a leg of American Air General Harold Price, adviser of Iran air force, and damaged the US Information Office in Teheran.

This "very serious event" — as admitted by Ziegler, Nixon's spokesman — will surely remind him of a series of bomb explosions at the US Army Headquarters in West Germany, at US public organs in France, at Columbia University and right in the Pentagon. All these bomb detonations have served the same warning that such a 'neo-colonialist peace' which Nixon has been taking much pain in searching for while US bombs and shells have been rained on Viet Nam on his own orders, is unacceptable to the world and American people.

SOUTH VIET NAM — CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION